

## Cochise 1805 – June 8, 1874

**“The Command Of Cochise”  
This is a historical / biographical work  
based on archival sources  
with edits, notes, images, arrangement  
by Larry W Jones**

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## Introduction

Cochise (Shi-ka-She or A-da-tli-chi) literally meaning “having the quality or strength of an oak”, later called K'uu-ch'ish or Cheis, which literally means “oak”. He was born around 1805 and died on June 8, 1874 at age 69. Cochise was leader of the [Chihuicahui local group of the Chokonen](#) and principal nantan (spokesman) of the Chokonen band of the Chiricahua Apache. A key war leader during the Apache Wars which began in 1849, he led an uprising that began in 1861 and persisted until a peace treaty was negotiated in 1872. [Cochise County](#) in Arizona is named after him.

Cochise (or "Cheis") was one of the most noted Apache leaders (along with Geronimo and Mangas Coloradas} to resist intrusions into traditional Indian lands by Mexicans and Americans during the 19th century. He was described as a large man (for the time), with a muscular frame, classical features, and long, black hair, which he wore in traditional Apache style.

Cochise and the Chokonen-Chiricahua Indians lived in the area that is now the northern region of [Sonora](#), Mexico; [New Mexico](#), and [Arizona](#), which they had settled in sometime before the arrival of the [European](#) explorers and colonists. s Spain and later Mexico attempted to gain dominion over the Chiricahua lands, the indigenous groups became increasingly resistant.

Cycles of warfare developed, which the Apache mostly won. Eventually, the Spanish tried a different approach; they tried to make the Apache dependent (thereby pacifying them), by giving them older firearms and liquor rations issued by the colonial government (this was called the "Galvez Peace Policy").

After Mexico gained independence from Spain and took control of this territory, it ended the practice, perhaps lacking the resources (and/or possibly the will) to continue it. The various Chiricahua bands resumed raiding in the 1830s to acquire what they wanted after the Mexicans stopped selling these goods to them.

**(Note)** “Gálvez Peace Policy” One of the most successful political policies during the three-hundred-year existence of the Spanish colony of New Spain (Mexico) (1521–1821) was the famed Gálvez Peace Policy, launched in 1786 for the northern frontier by Viceroy Bernardo de Gálvez, who himself had served as a young lieutenant on that same frontier. In fact, it eventually became the model on which our modern U.S. Indian reservation system was formed. During Spanish days, members of the peaceful Apache settlements, serving primarily as military auxiliaries of the presidios, enjoyed phenomenal success as long as they had the wealth and authority of the viceroyalty.

War with England forced Spanish officials to adopt some French innovations as well. French traders in Louisiana had mastered the art of diplomacy and trade with the sophisticated Indian nations of the Southeast and the Caddoan peoples of Texas. Learning from these teachers, Spanish officials like Viceroy Bernardo de Gálvez, who had served as acting governor of Louisiana, developed a three-pronged strategy articulated in his famous Instructions of 1786. Coordinated offensives were to be mounted against the Indian enemies of the *provincias internas*, particularly the Apaches. At the same time, however, alliances were to be forged whenever possible. “The vanquishment of the heathen consists in obliging them to destroy one another,” Gálvez noted with characteristic cynicism.

Juan Bautista de Anza, governor of New Mexico from 1777 to 1787, was perhaps the most successful practitioner of this second prong. He negotiated peace treaties with the Comanches and Navajos while preserving alliances with the Utes and Jicarilla Apaches. That put enormous pressure on the Western, Chiricahua, Mescalero, and Lipan Apaches. By the 1790s, several thousand Apaches had settled in “*establecimientos de paz*”, or Apache peace camps, near presidios like Janos, Fronteras, and Tucson. There they received weekly rations of meat, corn, tobacco, and brown sugar in return for not raiding Spanish settlements. Institutionalized bribery—the third prong of Gálvez’s peace policy—filled hungry bellies and gave Apaches an alternative to constant war. Although Apache raiding did not completely come to an end, a new era of relative peace and prosperity reigned—one negotiated by the State, not the Catholic Church. Missions no longer were instruments of expansion. Instead, their primary purpose for the rest of the colonial period was to maintain what historian Cynthia Radding calls the “colonial pact” between mission Indians and the Spanish empire.

As a result, the Mexican government began a series of military operations to stop the raiding by the Chiricahua, but they were fought to a standstill by the Apache. Cochise’s father, Naiche, was killed in the fighting. Cochise deepened his resolve, and the Chiricahua Apache pursued vengeance against the Mexicans. Mexican forces captured Cochise at one point in 1848 during an Apache raid on [Fronteras](#), Sonora, but he was exchanged for nearly a dozen Mexican prisoners.





EL EXMO. S. D. BERNARDO DE GALVEZ, CONDE DE GALVEZ CABA  
 llero pensionado de la Real y distinguida Orden Española de Carlos III. Comendador de Bolaños en la de  
 Calatrava, Teniente Grál. de los Rles. Ejércitos, Inspector Grál. de los de América, Capitan Grál. de la Provincia de la  
 Luisiana y dos Floridas, Virrey, Gobernador y Capitan Grál. de esta Nueva España, Presidente de su Real Aud  
 encia, Vize Protector de esta Real Academia de S. Carlos, Juró los referidos Empleos el día 17 de Junio dñ. a.º de 1785

**Bernardo Vicente de Gálvez y Madrid, 1st Count of Gálvez (23 July 1746 – 30 November 1786) was a Spanish military leader and government official who served as colonial governor of Spanish Louisiana and Cuba, and later as Viceroy of New Spain (Mexico).**



**Juan Bautista de Anza Bezerra Nieto (July 6 or 7, 1736 – December 19, 1788) was an expeditionary leader, military officer, and politician primarily in California and New Mexico under the Spanish Empire. He is credited as one of the founding fathers of Spanish California and served as an official within New Spain (Mexico) as Governor of the Province of New Mexico.**



## Border Tensions and Fighting

Beginning with early Spanish colonization around 1600, the Apache suffered tension and strife with European settlers until the greater part of the area was acquired by the United States in 1850 following the Mexican War. For a time, the two peoples managed peaceful relations. In the late 1850s, Cochise may have supplied firewood for the [Butterfield Overland Mail](#) stagecoach station at Apache Pass in Arizona.

**(Note)** Coaches passed through southeast Arizona twice a week on Sundays and Wednesdays. The route through southeastern Arizona from 1858 to 1861 crossed into what is now Arizona from Mesilla, New Mexico Territory at Stein's Pass, then headed west/southwest to San Simon, through Apache Pass, Ewell Springs, and Dragoon Springs (about twenty miles north of Tombstone). It crossed the San Pedro River just north of the present Benson and then veered slightly north to pass Cienega and head up to Tucson and on to San Francisco via Yuma and Los Angeles. The ruins of the Butterfield Station at Apache Pass are part of the Fort Bowie National Historic Site near Willcox.

The Butterfield Stage terminated operations along the southern route at the outbreak of the Civil War. When Texas seceded from the Union early in 1861, the Overland Mail abandoned the Southwest. Officials in Washington rewrote the mail contract so that stages would travel through Nebraska and Utah. This was a devastating blow to the settlers in the New Mexico Territory, which included all of present-day Arizona. The change was immediately obvious to the Apaches who must have watched from the mountains as the wagons, horses and mules were gathered up in an ever-growing caravan heading for California. The ominous parade included more than 200 horses, wagons, supplies, and twenty-one stagecoaches, empty except for the driver. The Overland Mail was moving out "lock, stock, and barrel." Some months before reporter Thompson Turner predicted that the removal of the Overland route would be a "death blow to Arizona." The next public mail to reach Tucson came from California on horseback September 1, 1865. The first through mail from the east arrived August 25, 1866.





**Butterfield Overland Stage Coach**



**Apache Pass Arizona**

The tenuous peace did not last, as American encroachment into Apache territory continued. In 1861, the Bascom Affair was a catalyst for armed confrontation. An Apache raiding party had driven away a local rancher's cattle and kidnapped his 12-year-old stepson (Felix Ward, who later became known as Mickey Free).

### **The Bascom Affair**

The Bascom Massacre was a confrontation between Apache Indians and the United States Army under Lt. George Nicholas Bascom in the Arizona Territory in early 1861. It has been considered to have directly precipitated the decades-long Apache Wars between the United States and several tribes in the southwestern United States. War was coming with the Chiricahua Apache.



### **Bascom Affair February 1861**

The affair led to an open break and open hostilities, but Cochise had not previously been peaceful, he had been prudent and avoided raiding Americans. He had, however, stolen livestock from the Overland Mail, from Fort Buchanan and had twice been forced to return stolen stock by Capt. Richard S. Ewell, who swore that if he had to deal with Cochise again, he would strike a blow.

The Bascom Affair began on January 27, 1861, when Tonto Apache parties raided the ranch of John Ward at Sonoita Creek, stealing several head of livestock and kidnapping Ward's 12-year-old stepson Felix Ward.

Ward reported the raid to the nearby military authority, Lt. Col. Morrison, the commandant of Fort Buchanan, Arizona, who directed Lt. George Nicholas Bascom and a large group of infantry to attempt to recover the boy. Bascom and his men were unable to locate the boy or the tribe. Because Ward said the kidnappers had gone east towards the Chiricahua Mountains, it was assumed that the raid involved Chiricahua Apaches, which would have been a routine activity for local Apaches. It was later determined that Coyotero Apaches had actually been responsible for the kidnapping.

Morrison ordered Bascom to use whatever means necessary to punish the kidnappers and recapture the boy. Bascom, Ward and 54 soldiers journeyed east to Apache Pass, arriving on February 3, 1861, and met Sgt. Daniel Robinson, who would accompany them for the rest of the expedition. Bascom convinced a Chiricahua Apache leader named Cochise to meet with him. Suspicious of Bascom's intentions, Cochise brought with him his brother Coyuntwa, two nephews, his wife and his two children. At the meeting Cochise claimed he knew nothing of the raid. Doubting Cochise's honesty, Bascom attempted to imprison him and his family in a tent to be held hostage, but Cochise was able to escape alone by slashing a hole in the canvas wall.

Two days later, on February 5, Cochise delivered a message to Bascom asking for the release of his family, but Bascom refused and told Cochise that they "would be set free just so soon as the boy was released". The following day, under the command of Cochise, a large party of Apaches attacked a group of unaware American and Mexican teamsters. After torturing and killing the nine Mexicans, he took the three Americans hostage, offering them in exchange for his family, but Bascom maintained that he would accept nothing other than the return of the boy and cattle. On February 7, Cochise and his men attacked Bascom's soldiers while they were fetching water.

Cochise quickly fled with his hostages to Sonora, Mexico, which was outside American jurisdiction. On the way he tortured and killed the American prisoners and left their remains to be discovered by Bascom. Several days later, on February 19, 1861, Lt. Isaiah Moore, who had led a relief party of cavalry to Apache Pass, hanged Cochise's brother and nephews before he and his soldiers began their journey home. The moment when Cochise discovered his brother and nephews dead has been called the moment when the Indians (the Chiricahua in particular) transferred their hatred of the Mexicans to the Americans. Cochise's subsequent war of vengeance, in the form of numerous raids and murders, was the beginning of the 25-year-long Apache Wars.

Felix Ward, the kidnapped boy, was later found living with the Coyotero Apaches and became an Apache Scout for the U.S. Army known by the name of Mickey Free.



**Attack Upon an Overland Stage in Arizona—Train Destroyed by Indians—Eight Murdered Men Lying by the Roadside.**

The *Arizonian* has the following:

On Tuesday evening, February 5, the Overland stage, going East, took from here eight passengers. Among the number was the agent, Mr. Buckley, Lieutenant Cook, Eighth Infantry, U. S. A., and Mr. W. S. Grand, of Tucson. They arrived at Apache Pass near midnight, on Wednesday, and were fired upon some two miles this side of the Station, by what appeared to be a large body of Indians; the night being very dark, only one man, the driver, King Lyon, was hit, although some fifteen rounds were fired. The ball took effect in his leg, and broke it. One mule was killed, and another badly wounded; but after cutting out the former, they were enabled to reach the Station with the remaining mules. It was about one o'clock on Thursday morning when they arrived.

The company of Infantry from Fort Buchanan, under Lieutenant Bascom, had arrived on Monday. He held a conference with Cachus, and his braves, demanding the surrender of the Mexican captive and the stock stolen from Ward's rancho, an account of which will be found in another column. Cachus was willing to return the stolen stock, but would not consent to restore the boy.

Lieutenant Bascom, as we learn, then took the Chief and six other Indians prisoners, intending to hold them as hostages. Cachus, however, effected his escape, after a desperate rush through the guard, while the soldiers were securing the others. The next

Lieutenant Bascom, as we learn, then took the Chief and six other Indians prisoners, intending to hold them as hostages. Cachus, however, effected his escape, after a desperate rush through the guard, while the soldiers were securing the others. The next day the Indians came around in large numbers, and hoisted a white flag. After some hesitation, Mr. Charles W. Culver, Station-keeper, and his assistant, Mr. Welch, with Mr. Jas. F. Wallace, driver on the line, presuming too much on their friendly relations with the Indians, resolved to go out and confer with the savages.

The Indians, who frequently use the white flag only as a decoy, no sooner got these confiding men within their grasp than they attempted to seize them. They succeeded in capturing Wallace. Culver escaped, wounded, after knocking down two Indians. Welch also escaped, and got to the corral of the station, when he was shot dead. The next day the Indians appeared, leading Wallace, with his arms bound behind his back, and a rope about his neck. On the same day, Mr. John A. Ward, the guardian of the boy who had been captured, and a soldier, were wounded.

A. B. Culver, brother of the wounded man, and conductor on the stage which arrived at the Pass from the East, was induced to ride an express to Tucson, to give information of the state of affairs. An escort of soldiers sent to Fort Buchanan for medical aid and more soldiers, accompanied him as far as Dragoon Springs. He rode the 125 miles in twenty-four hours, changing horses at every station. A short distance this side of the station he found the remains of a wagon-train, and the bodies of eight men murdered

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Cincinnati Daily Press March 02, 1861



# **The Command Of Cochise**

Cochise and his band were mistakenly accused of the incident (which had been carried out by another band, Coyotero Apache). Army officer Lt. George Bascom invited Cochise to the Army's encampment in the belief that the warrior was responsible for the incident. Cochise maintained his innocence and offered to look into the matter with other Apache groups, but the officer tried to arrest him. Cochise escaped by drawing a knife and slashing his way out of the tent, but was shot at as he fled.

Bascom captured some of Cochise's relatives, who apparently were taken by surprise as Cochise escaped. Cochise eventually also took hostages to use in negotiations to free the Apache Indians. However, the negotiations fell apart, because the arrival of U.S. troop reinforcements led Cochise to believe that the situation was spiraling out of his control. Both sides eventually killed all their remaining hostages.

Cochise went on to carry out about 11 years of relentless warfare, reducing much of the Mexican-American settlements in southern Arizona to a burned-out wasteland. Dan L. Thrapp (a chronicler of the American West) estimated the total death toll of settlers and Mexican-American travelers as 5,000, but most historians believe it was more likely a few hundred. The mistaken arrest of Cochise by Lt. Bascom is still remembered by the Chiricahua's descendants today, who describe the incident as "Cut the Tent".

Cochise joined with his father-in-law Mangas Coloradas (Red Sleeves, Kan-da-zis Tlishishen), the powerful Chihenne-Chiricahua chief, in a long series of retaliatory skirmishes and raids on the white settlements and ranches. The Battle Of Dragoon Springs was one of these engagements. During the raids, many people were killed, but the Apache quite often had the upper hand.

The United States was distracted by its own internal conflict of the looming Civil War, and had begun to pull military forces out of the area. Additionally, the Apaches were highly adapted to living and fighting in the harsh terrain of the Southwest. Many years passed before the US Army, using tactics conceived by General George Crook and later adopted by General Nelson A. Miles, was able to effectively challenge the Apache warriors on their own lands.

## COCHISE.

### How the Apache Chief Became the White Man's Foe.

It is reported that the band of Cochise, the most fierce and dreaded of the Apache chiefs, has been induced by the agents of the Indian Bureau to come upon the reservation. The family of Cochise did not come in, as the chief was absent; but they promised on his return to try and induce him to join the others. If this report is true, it is to be hoped that the utmost exertions will be used to make terms with this noted warrior, and that such efforts may prove successful. General Stoneman says that when he first saw the Apaches in 1846 they were splendidly mounted; every warrior rode a stallion, and every squaw a mare. They were dressed in buckskins, their lances were bright, and theirappings superb. Seven hundred of them rode together. They were the terror of Mexico and rode far into the republic; but they treated the Americans with chivalry, and bands of California emigrants could ride through Arizona unharmed. The Arizona Apache is now a starving hyena, eating squirrels, rats, owls, anything to keep life and vengeance alive. Cochise himself is said to be a splendid physical specimen of a man, of wonder-

thing to keep life and vengeance alive. Cochise himself is said to be a splendid physical specimen of a man, of wonderful alertness and remarkable sagacity. He was at peace with the whites when his camp was attacked and his wife and brother captured. Some days afterward he and nine other men rode up to the attacking party, mounted on good horses, and holding lariats to which were attached the necks of nine white captives. Cochise's message was, "Give me my wife and my brother, and these prisoners shall be set free." The white people answered this by hanging on a gallows the chief's wife and brother, and immediately the Indians bounded off, dragging the unfortunate hostages over the desert. Since that time Cochise has been merciless in his vengeance, and his name is a terror throughout the border. Although the horrible cruelties he has committed on unoffending whites cannot be excused, it must be remembered that he was not the aggressor in the first instance, and that he was only pursuing the mode of warfare which is considered perfectly legitimate among his race. If this remarkable man could be induced to become friendly once more, his influence on the wild tribes would be of incalculable advantage to us.

Public Ledger Memphis Tennessee July 19, 1871

**Mangas  
Coloradas.**

1793 – January  
18, 1863

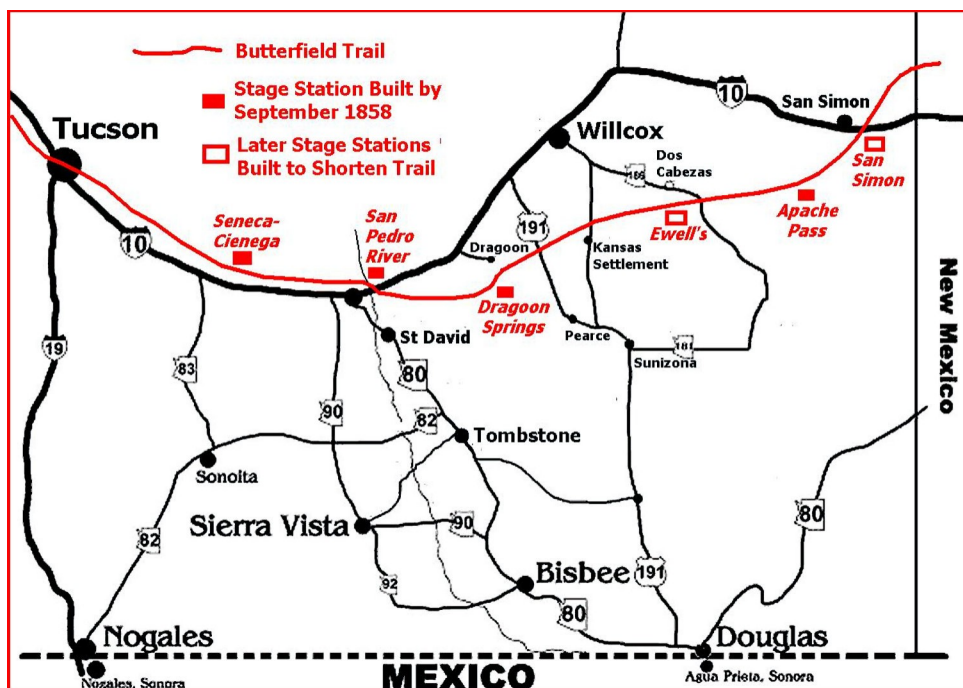
**Father-in-law  
of Cochise.**



# The Command Of Cochise

## First Battle of Dragoon Springs

The First Battle of Dragoon Springs was a minor skirmish between a small troop of Confederate dragoons of Governor John R. Baylor's Arizona Rangers, and a band of Apache warriors during the American Civil War. It was fought on May 5, 1862, near the present-day town of Benson, Arizona, in Confederate Arizona.



**Background** - Creation of a separate Arizona Territory distinct from the New Mexico Territory in the late 1850s was thwarted over disagreement in Congress on the new territory's boundary: Northern representatives argued for a north-south division along the present Arizona-New Mexico boundary,



whereas Southern representatives pushed for an east–west division along the 34th parallel. With the coming of the Civil War, the new Confederate government was free to establish the boundary as it saw fit.

Shortly after the arrival of Confederate forces from Texas, secessionists met at Mesilla to adopt an Ordinance of Secession, on March 16, 1861. This aim became a reality following the Confederate victory at the First Battle of Mesilla on July 25, 1861. On August 1, 1861, Lt. Col. John R. Baylor, commanding the victorious Confederate troops at Mesilla, issued a proclamation declaring the creation of a provisional Confederate Territory of Arizona, to include all of the former United States Territory of New Mexico south of the 34th parallel north.

Baylor named himself governor and set up a territorial government that would continue in operation until the Confederates were forced out of New Mexico in July 1862. This Territory of Arizona was officially declared by Confederate President Jefferson Davis on February 14, 1862, and shortly thereafter Confederate forces were deployed on the ambitious New Mexico Campaign to gain control of the Southwest. In order to make good the Confederacy's claim to the western portion of their new Arizona Territory, Confederate soldiers, commanded by Capt. Sherod Hunter, were ordered to occupy Tucson, arriving there on February 28, 1862. They occupied the town until May 14, 1862, and it was a detachment of these troops that was involved in the fight at Dragoon Springs on May 5.

**The Battle** - On May 5, 1862, a small band of mounted Confederates escorting Union prisoners to Texas was encamped at an abandoned Butterfield Overland Mail stagecoach station and spring in the Dragoon Mountains, about 16 miles from the present-day town of Benson and near Dragoon, Arizona. A force of about 100 Chiricahua Apache warriors, commanded by the war chiefs Cochise and Francisco, ambushed the party.

Three Confederate soldiers and a young Mexican stock herder were killed. The Apaches succeeded in capturing a large number of livestock and horses. This minor skirmish is noted for causing the Confederacy's westernmost battle deaths, and is the only known engagement in which Confederate soldiers were killed within the modern confines of Arizona. It is often included as a part of the Apache Wars fought between Apaches and Americans between 1851 and 1900.

**Aftermath** - A few days later, on May 9, after hearing of the attack, Capt. Sherod Hunter ordered his men to take back the captured herd of cattle and horses, as well as to avenge the deaths of their fellow soldiers. The Confederates succeeded, recapturing the stolen animals and killing five Apaches with no loss of their own.

## **Second Battle of Dragoon Springs**

The Second Battle of Dragoon Springs was one of two skirmishes involving Apache warriors and Confederate soldiers in Arizona. It was fought during the American Civil War on May 9, 1862, and was a response to the First Battle of Dragoon Springs in which Confederate forces were defeated. Four men were killed in the first skirmish and several heads of livestock were captured. The rebel commander Captain Sherod Hunter, ordered his foraging squad to take back the livestock from Cochise's warriors, during which five Apaches were killed. There were no Confederate casualties.

## **The Arizona Rangers**

In July 1861, Confederate military forces under the command of Lt. Colonel John Robert Baylor invaded the U.S. Territory of New Mexico. John Baylor was a famous Texas lawyer, politician, frontiersman and Indian fighter who had served as an ardent advocate of secession at that State's Secession Convention in February 1861. On August 1, 1861, after defeating the Federal garrison of Fort Fillmore (located near Mesilla), Baylor declared the creation of a new Confederate Territory of Arizona and installed himself as Governor.

One of the most serious problems Governor Baylor faced when he assumed power in Arizona was the depredations of the various Apache bands, who were at the time engaged in what one contemporary source has called "a saturnalia of slaughter" so severe that "the last glimmer of civilization seemed about to be quenched in blood." Apache raiding parties (such as the one shown above) burned wagon trains, raided and looted mines and ranches, and even besieged sizeable towns such as Pinos Altos and Tubac. Prisoners taken by the Apaches were often tortured horribly. The entire Territory was in a state of terror, and it was up to Baylor to find a way to restore order.

Taking a page from the history of his home State, Baylor decided to raise a regiment of Rangers for frontier defense. Like the famous Texas Rangers with which he was familiar, this regiment of Arizona Rangers would consist several companies of cavalry, which would patrol the frontier areas of the Confederate Territory of Arizona.

Recruiting for this regiment began in December 1861, with Sherod Hunter (a native of Tennessee who had settled near the present town of Deming, New Mexico, in the mid-1850s) commissioned as Captain of the first Company. The company was enlisted for "three years, or the war," and was composed of (to quote the MESILLA TIMES, the largest newspaper in Arizona at that time) "picked men, inured to the hardships of frontier life, and conversant with its details." The company was mustered into the Confederate service on January 25, 1862 at Mesilla.

Captain Sherod Hunter and Company A, Baylor's Regiment of Arizona Rangers, were ordered to proceed to Tucson on February 10, 1862. They arrived on February 28, 1862, and held a formal ceremony at which they raised a Confederate First National Flag over the town plaza on March 1. It was probably in a rush of patriotism following this ceremony that Private Richardo, a Hispanic youth from Tucson, joined the company.

On May 5, 1862, these men were among a foraging party which had been sent from Tucson to gather stray cattle in the vicinity of the abandoned Butterfield Overland Stagecoach Station at Dragoon Springs, located about 16 miles east of present-day Benson, Arizona. As they entered a narrow box canyon wherein the springs are located, the party was ambushed by a large band of Apache warriors (such as the one shown above), numbering as many as 100 men and commanded by the great war chiefs, Francisco and Cochise. Most of the Confederate force managed to escape with their lives, but they left behind 25 horses, 30 mules, and four of their comrades...the men who have found their eternal rest at Dragoon Springs. They are the most westerly Confederate battle deaths of the war, and the only such to occur within the confines of what is today modern Arizona.



**Butterfield Overland Stage Stop**



**DRAGOON SPRINGS, ARIZONA:** At this lonely spot in the Arizona desert are four long-forgotten graves. The graves are the final resting places of four members of Captain Sherod Hunter's Company of Arizona Rangers (Company A, Governor John R. Baylor's Regiment of Arizona Rangers): Sergeant Sam Ford, a private known only as Richardo, and two other soldiers whose names have been lost to history (one of these is probably John Donaldson, based on an obituary which appeared in a Tucson newspaper. However, there is nothing at the gravesite itself to indicate this, and it is unknown as to which, if either, of the two unmarked graves is that of Donaldson).

It is unknown if any of the four men buried at Dragoon Springs took part in the engagements which Captain Sherod Hunter's command fought against the Union California Column during March and April of 1862. On May 5, 1862, these men were among a foraging party which had been sent from Tucson to gather stray cattle in the vicinity of the abandoned Butterfield Overland Stagecoach Station at Dragoon Springs, located about 16 miles east of present-day Benson, Arizona. As they entered a narrow box canyon wherein the springs are located, the party was ambushed by a large band of Apache warriors (such as the one shown above), numbering as many as 100 men and commanded by the great war chiefs, Francisco and Cochise. Most of the Confederate force managed to escape with their lives, but they left behind 25 horses, 30 mules, and four of their comrades...the men who have found their eternal rest at Dragoon Springs.





### Arizona Rangers

**Forts Craig and Staunton, prepared to resist all attacks.**

**Capt. George Frazier, of Mesilla, is organizing a company for the Confederate States service, to be called the Arizona Rangers. They are bold, hardy and unconquerable.**

The massacre of the mail party at Cook's Springs was only after a most desperate struggle. It appears the Indians, one hundred in number, first succeeded in stampeding the mules—the coach was upset, and the mules ran off. The mail party secured their arms and retreated to a hill, where they built a small rock wall. The fight appears to have lasted two days. All about this wall the ground was strewn with battered bullets—Every rock and stone within many yards which could have partially secreted an Indian, had bullets lying near. One small tree, some hundred and fifty yards from the wall, had the marks of eleven balls on it. The horrors and sufferings which these men must have undergone, is inexpressible. Nearly all had their arms broken. All were wounded in the arms, and shot through the head. Four of the bodies were found within the wall, one in front of it, and two some fifty yards in the rear.

The United States troops have abandoned Western Arizona, destroying Fort Breckin-

all that dence or as that other cotton, was from wh

Mr. B Charles Russell beats all Yankees had Wa

He said ask Mr. of Amer cording admit th oath of that the He (Mr. Beiligny ge her, s terday t the treat fl g carr step of c

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### **Battle of Apache Pass**

The Battle of Apache Pass was fought in 1862 at Apache Pass, Arizona, in the United States, between numerous Apache warriors and the Union volunteers of the California Column as it marched from California to capture Confederate Arizona and to reinforce New Mexico's Union army. It was one of the largest battles between the Americans and the Chiricahua during the Apache Wars.

**Background** - The 2500 men of the California Column traveled across the arid Southwest in staggered groups to allow water sources to replenish. In early 1862 Col. James H. Carleton sent units from Fort Yuma to Tucson, Arizona, which had recently been occupied by a Confederate force, Company A, Arizona Rangers. After a small engagement known as the Battle of Picacho Pass just north of Tucson between a detachment of Carleton's cavalry and Confederate pickets, the Union forces advanced on Tucson in three columns. They arrived in Tucson on May 20, forcing the heavily outnumbered Confederate garrison to withdraw to Texas without a fight.

After capturing Confederate Arizona's western outpost, Carleton prepared to march east with his main body in July, intending to enter New Mexico through Apache Pass in southeast Arizona. To prepare for the advance of his main force, he sent a column ahead as he had on his march from Yuma to Tucson. The column was led by Capt. Thomas L. Roberts of Company E, 1st California Infantry, accompanied by two 12-pounder mountain howitzers under the command of Sgt. James D. Monihon, a 22-man cavalry escort from Company B, 2nd Regiment California Volunteer Cavalry, led by Capt. John C. Cremony and 21 wagons plus 242 mules and horses.

After Roberts reached the San Pedro River, it became necessary to learn whether Dragoon Springs, 28 miles further east, could supply both companies with water or whether they would be forced to separate into smaller detachments. Capt. Roberts led the advance detachment with his infantry company, joined by three wagons, the howitzers and seven of Cremony's best horsemen to serve as scouts and couriers.



SEPTEMBER 4, 1862.

## Nevada Democrat.

### The California Column.

The California Volunteers under General Carleton, 2,000 strong, had reached Ojo de Vaca, within 60 miles of Mesilla, on the 2d of July, in good health and spirits. They have made several extraordinary forced marches, over long stretches of hot, barren and dry country. The column is composed mainly of hardy miners, accustomed to fatigue and hardship, who were especially fitted for such trials as they have had to endure. A correspondent of the Alta writes from the column as follows:

In all the column of nearly 2,000 men, undergoing almost incredible fatigues, I have not heard a single murmur; not one word of complaint; 17 miles is deemed a forced march for infantry in all armies, even when passing through settled and cultivated regions, garnished with farms, villages and towns, containing all that is requisite for comfort, not to say mere subsistence. But when we compare such marches with those of 36, 40, and 53 miles, with only a couple of hours' rest, an almost entire destitution of water, and under a burning sun, with only one meal in 24 hours, and enveloped in dense clouds of dust, the former sink into insignificance—nevertheless, the California column has done it, and done it nobly. Gen. Canby did not hesitate

done it nobly. Gen. Canby did not hesitate to assert that it was impracticable to march a column of any considerable force from California to New Mexico, and when he learned that such a column was preparing to reinforce him, could not believe that it would consist of more than a scouting party sent to watch the movements of the enemy about Tucson. You may judge of his astonishment when he learned that the advanced guard of a squadron of cavalry, under Lieut. Col. Eyre, was already on the Rio Grande, and raised the stars and stripes over Fort Thorne, Mesilla, and numerous other places immediately in the rear of the Texans under Col. Steele, who had stampeded, in the belief that the column was also close at hand. In all verity, we have materially assisted in retaking New Mexico and Arizona, although without actual conflict.

**The Nevada Democrat Nevada, Calif. September 04, 1862**

Capt. Cremony remained behind with 15 cavalrymen and ten of Roberts' infantrymen, including the detachment left as a garrison at the river, where an adobe stage station building provided shelter and a defensive position to guard the remaining wagons and animals.

Roberts found the water at Dagoon Springs was enough to support the entire force, and Cremony joined with him the next day. Together they advanced on the springs at Apache Pass in the same manner, leaving Cremony with the guard detachment.

**The Battle** - At noon on July 15, Roberts' detachment had just entered Apache Pass. After traveling about two-thirds of the way through, his force was attacked by about 500 Apache warriors led by Mangas Coloradas and Cochise (Geronimo claimed to have fought in this battle but this has not been confirmed).

The Union soldiers were not in a good situation. The infantrymen had walked dozens of miles across the hot Arizona desert, heading for the spring at Apache Pass, which was now blocked to them by the well-armed Chiricahua warriors. Low on water, and realizing a retreat back to Tucson without water could cost him many men, Roberts chose to fight. The Apaches had thrown up defenses, which consisted of several breastworks made of stone. They had also surprised the invaders with an ambush, waiting until the soldiers came within 30–80 yards of their positions before opening fire. Behind almost every mesquite tree and boulder hid an Apache with his rifle, six-shooter and knife. At first the Union troops could barely see their attackers. After a few minutes of intense combat Roberts ordered retreat, and his force withdrew to the mouth of Apache Pass. His men regrouped and unlimbered the mountain howitzers for an advance against the Apaches.

This was one of the first times the United States Army had been able to use artillery against the Indians in the Southwest. Roberts ordered his infantry to take the hills overlooking the pass, while he remained in the pass to direct the artillery support. The skirmishers moved forward, where they were able to take cover in an abandoned Butterfield Overland Mail station. The soldiers were now about 600 yards from the spring. Overlooking the spring were two hills, one on the east, the other on the south. The Apache riflemen behind the breastworks on the hills were delivering a deadly fire against the attackers.

Roberts advanced with his howitzers and had them open fire. Their effectiveness was limited by the fact that they were 300–400 feet below the Apache defenses. Roberts moved his guns ahead to a better position, all the time under heavy fire. Once the guns were in effective range, the artillery opened fire in earnest. The Apaches held their positions until nightfall, when they fled, allowing the Union troops to reach the spring. After allowing his tired men to enjoy a meal, Roberts retreated to bring up Cremony's detachment. The next morning the Apaches returned, but they fled once the artillery opened fire on them.

Several written accounts provide the basis for understanding this important battle. Albert J. Fountain, Company E, 1st California Infantry, a sergeant during the engagement, provided perhaps the best first-person account of the battle. Fountain led an adventurous life as a newspaper correspondent, soldier, scout, Indian fighter, and, later, a Texas state senator and lawyer. He played an important role in New Mexico's history.

Historians of the Indian Wars are familiar with Fountain's account of the battle in the November 15, 1908, issue of the *Arizona Star*, which appeared after his death. However, Fountain's most detailed account of the event appeared in the *Rio Grande Republican* on January 2, 1891. Fountain's version gives a detailed account of troop deployments and tactics used during the battle. It correlates well with other historical accounts. Field observations tend to confirm the accuracy of Fountain's 1891 account, but provide additional information and a somewhat different interpretation of the battle.

**Aftermath** - Two of Capt. Roberts' men were killed and three wounded in the battle for the spring. According to a report Col. Carleton made to Col. Richard C. Drum on September 20, 1862, about 10 Apaches were killed.

From the hostile attitude of the Chiricahua, I found it indispensably necessary to establish a post in what is known as Apache Pass; it is known as Fort Bowie, and garrisoned by one hundred rank and file of the Fifth Infantry, California Volunteers, and thirteen rank and file of Company A, First Cavalry, California Volunteers; this post commands the water in that pass. Around this water the Indians have been in the habit of lying in ambush, and shooting the troops and travelers as they came to drink. In this way they have killed three of Lieutenant-Colonel Eyre's command, and in attempting to keep Captain Roberts' company, First Infantry, California Volunteers, away from the spring a fight ensued, in which Captain Roberts had two men killed and two wounded. Captain Roberts reports that the Indians lost ten killed. In this affair the men of Captain Roberts' company are reported as behaving with great gallantry.

According to Capt. Cremony, however, a prominent Apache who was present in the engagement had said that 63 warriors were killed by the artillery, while only three died from small-arms fire. Said the unnamed Apache, "We would have done well enough if you had not fired wagons at us." The howitzers, being on wheels, were called wagons by the Apaches, who were unfamiliar with artillery tactics. Mangas Coloradas himself was wounded in the action, having been shot in the chest when attempting to kill one of Roberts' cavalry scouts.

One day after the battle, on the New Mexico side of Apache Pass, the bodies of nine scalped white civilians were found. Carleton decided that it was necessary to establish a post at the pass to prevent settlers from being ambushed as they passed through it. On August 4 the first units of the California Column reached Mesilla, New Mexico, along the Rio Grande. At the same time the last remnants of the Confederate army withdrew to Texas. The 5th California Infantry was ordered to build a fort in Apache Pass, calling it Fort Bowie in honor of their colonel, George Washington Bowie. Carleton was placed in command of the Union's Department of New Mexico, and he continued to campaign against the Apaches in that area.



### **James Henry Carleton**

While New Mexico department commander, Carleton concentrated on the threat posed by Apache and Navajo raiders. His first campaign was against the Mescalero Apache led by Mangas Coloradas. It was led by Christopher "Kit" Carson, leading New Mexican militia and California Volunteers. In October 1862, Carleton established Fort Sumner to house captured Mescalero Apache, despite warnings of its unsuitability for a large human presence. One notorious quote by Carleton on the Mescalero Apache: All Indian men of that tribe are to be killed whenever and wherever you can find them. ... If the Indians send in a flag of truce say to the bearer ... that you have been sent to punish them for their treachery and their crimes. That you have no power to make peace, that you are there to kill them wherever you can find them.





### **Capture, Escape and Retirement**

Following various skirmishes, Cochise and his men were gradually driven into Arizona's Dragoon Mountains, but used the mountains for cover and as a base from which to continue attacks against white settlements. Cochise evaded capture and continued his raids against white settlements and travelers until 1872. In 1871, General Oliver O. Howard was ordered to find Cochise, and in 1872, Howard was accompanied by his aide 1st Lt Joseph A. Sladen and Captain Samuel S. Sumner to Arizona to negotiate a peace treaty with Cochise. Tom Jeffords, the Apache leader's only white friend, was also present. A treaty was negotiated on October 12, 1872. Based on statements by Sumner and descriptions by Sladen, modern historians such as Robert M. Utley believe that Cochise's Spanish interpreter was Geronimo.

After the peace treaty, Cochise retired to the short-lived Chiricahua Reservation (1872–1876), with his friend Jeffords as agent. He died of natural causes (probably abdominal cancer) in 1874, and was buried in the rocks above one of his favorite camps in Arizona's Dragoon Mountains, now called the Cochise Stronghold. Only his people and Tom Jeffords knew the exact location of his resting place, and they took the secret to their graves.

Many of Cochise's descendants reside at the Mescalero Apache Reservation near Ruidoso, New Mexico, and in Oklahoma with the Fort Sill Apache Tribe of Chiricahua Warm Springs Apache.



### Death of Cochise.

A telegram from San Francisco announces that Cochise, the famous Indian chief, died on Tuesday last, in Arizona. He had been sick a long time, and feeling satisfied that he was afflicted by witchcraft, he refused to let the doctor administer to his wants. Illness had reduced this once powerful man almost to a skeleton. Cochise was head of the Coyotoros, a branch of the Apache tribe, numbering about 2000, and occupying the White Mountain district in Arizona. He and a few others survived a treacherous massacre by United States troops, and thenceforth he was one of the bitterest enemies of the white man. Little effort had previously been made to pacify his followers, for down to 1870 no government officer had visited them or sought to improve their condition. In that year Governor Safford, of Arizona, went among them, and in his report said: "I am convinced that the Coyotoros tribe, which I visited in the White Mountains, could be made permanently peaceable and friendly with the whites if a good man could take charge of and remain constantly in the midst of them to encourage and aid them in agriculture and supply their pressing necessities."

During the year in question, the Apaches were left without food or raiment by the neglect of Congress, and they accordingly became restless and predatory. In 1871 popular feeling became very strong in Mexico against Cochise, who was regarded as responsible for the outrages committed by his tribe. Secure in his mountain recesses, however, he set at defiance the power ex-

popular feeling became very strong in Mexico against Cochise, who was regarded as responsible for the outrages committed by his tribe. Secure in his mountain recesses, however, he set at defiance the power exerted for his capture. An effort was accordingly made to negotiate with him. Mr. Jeffords succeeded in finding him, but the chief refused to go to the Indian agency at Canada Alamosa, on the Rio Grande, where a conference was desired. He said he was afraid of the scouting parties in Arizona and New Mexico, and would not leave his stronghold except accompanied by his women and children. Another effort was made at the instance of Superintendent Pope to treat with him, but General Crook intervened and took the matter in his own hands. Owing to the wise measures adopted by the latter, Cochise at last relented, and promised to live at peace with the white settlers.

His influence has since been powerful for good, and it is now feared that trouble will follow in selecting his successor. On this account Superintendent Dudley, of New Mexico, intended waiting among the Coyoteros until the matter was decided. There are three candidates; first, the spiritualist or medicine man who ranks next to Cochise, whose name is Skin ya; second, Huck el Zee, the war chief, who is a great friend of the whites, and third, Cochise's eldest son, named Tuch la, who is very large and powerful, but is also irresolute and lazy. It is deemed unlikely that the latter could govern his tribe without first having shown his prowess in raiding. Still, he is the favorite of Mr. Jeffords, who has had long experience among the Apaches, and is qualified to estimate the merits of the rival warriors.—*New York Tribune*.





### About the Author

**Larry W Jones is a songwriter, having penned over 7,700 song lyrics. Published in 22 volumes of island themed, country, cowboy, western and bluegrass songs. The entire assemblage is the world's largest collection of lyrics written by an individual songwriter.**

**As a wrangler on the "Great American Horse Drive", at age 68, he assisted in driving 800 half-wild horses 62 miles in two days, from Winter pasture grounds in far NW Colorado to the Big Gulch Ranch outside of Craig Colorado.**

**His book, "The Oldest Greenhorn", chronicles the adventures and perils in earning the "Gate-to-Gate" trophy belt buckle the hard way.**





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